Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1691 - January 8, 2010

The following is a closed circuit and not necessarily for air. With an update on amateur Radio Newsline's finances, here's our producer Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF:

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OK. Ill try to be brief. Its January, We've paid about half of the December bills and we have no funds to pay the rest. About $74 in the bank right now. Simply said, we need your financial support to keep Newsline coming your way. The easy way to donate is by Pay-Pal at www.arnewsline.org. Our new mailing address will be at the end of this weeks report. We sincerely thank your for your ongoing support. And there, I kept it as brief as I could.

Jim.

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Thank you Bill. Now, Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1691 with a release date of Friday, January 8, 2010 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. Putting a new repeater on the air in the U-K may soon get a lot harder to do; a possible way that the United States might inventory all of its spectrum; South Africa's SumbandillaSat goes to QRP operation and a 102 year old Canadian ham is back on the year after being off for the past two decades. Find out whom she is and who provided the gear on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1691 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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SPECTRUM IN TRANSITION: REPEATERS IN THE UK WARNED TO USE IT OR LOOSE IT

The world-wide spectrum crunch is becoming a major concern to hams in the United Kingdom. That's where putting up and maintaining a repeater may soon become more complex as an item posted on the website of the RSGB Emerging Technology Co-ordination Committee indicates that the criteria for processing repeater applications will be tightened. It could also impact negatively on both the owners and users of current UK systems on 70 centimeters and above. Frank Haas, KB4T, has the details:

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Published on January 3rd, the article titled "Taking Stock" says that it is likely that strict criteria will be applied in the new year for new United Kingdom repeater applications. It says that against the backdrop of low activity levels, and poorly performing repeaters, the need to justify new applications is likely to be enforced to a far greater extent.

The article also includes a warning to those system operators whose currently operational repeaters have failed to meet the current

criteria. It says that long-term non-operational repeaters, repeaters licensed but failing to ever begin service and repeaters nominally operational but widely reported as being either deaf or inaccessible for other reasons has become all too prevalent. In simple United States terms, the adage "use it or loose it" would likely be apropos and be applied.

Along those lines the article post goes on to state that the recent interest in digital modes has been a welcome boost to the repeater sector of the hobby. But it notes that challenges to amateur use of bands above 2 Meters is likely to require even greater proof that hams need and value these bands. This, to support their society in fending off commercial interest at 70centimeters and above.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Frank Haas, KB4T, in Holly Hill, Florida.

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The article ends by noting that the focus on radio spectrum in the UK is going to intensify in the coming decade. It says that radio amateurs in that nation have to be seen as having their house in order and make good use of the valuable spectrum at their disposal in the so called "sweet-spot" of the radio bands.

(From http://www.ukrepeater.net/ via Southgate)

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SPECTRUM IN TRANSITION: ONE POSSIBLE WAY TO CONDUCT A SPECTRUM INVENTORY

A follow-up on last weeks story concerning the likelihood of a congressionally mandated inventory of the entire electromagnetic spectrum. This, to ascertain what might be available for transfer to wireless broadband.

>From the e-mail we have received, there are a lot of questions as to how such an inventory would be accomplished. There are many ways and with one possible and probable answer here's Amateur Radio Newsline's Norm Seeley, KI7UP:

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If the spectrum inventory process is conducted in the same way as has been other government mandated surveys, it will not be a true census or head count. Rather, it will likely be based on data already in the government's possession and that which it can obtain, rather than actual "monitoring" of all of the spectrum from DC to light and beyond. The government already has a pretty good idea of whom is on the air and where they are operating. This is because the FCC is mandated to keep accurate records of whom it licenses and to what spectrum a given licensee is assigned. At least the initial count would be whom the FCC has "licensed" to operate on a given frequency or in a given frequency band. As such, it can only be as accurate as the FCC database and not truly indicative of whom is on what spectral parcel at what time.

More accurate would be the tally of frequency usage by the government itself as maintained by the National Telecommunications and Information Agency's Office of Spectrum Management. The Office of Spectrum Management or O-S-M is responsible for managing the Federal Government's use of the radio frequency spectrum is kind of an FCC for the government itself.

If the inventory is accomplished based on records of what civil and government operations use a given frequency or band of frequencies, then for ham radio bands its all but impossible to know exactly whom is active and where he or she is operating. This is because our licenses permit not only bands of frequencies, but we choose the spot in a given band on which we operate. This as opposed to most other services that have specific "frequency assignments" or "channels." The best that can happen in ham radio is a very, very rough estimate of whom might be on a given amateur radio band but not a true count of actual activity. This is especially true as you hit the amateur radio allocations at 1 point 2 Gigahertz and above.

All this said, what you are not likely to see is banks of technicians sitting in front of manually operated or even computer controlled receivers and scanners at monitoring centers or in vehicles roaming the nation and counting signals. Even with the most modern automated receiving gear, such an actual headcount could take years. And as we have already reported, Representative Rick Boucher of Virginia who is sponsoring the measure that would mandate such a government inventory of the airwaves says it needs to be completed as quickly as is possible.

So it is more likely to be accomplished empirically rather than as a finite head count of whom is on the air at the moment in time a given frequency is looked at in Seattle, Des Moines, New York or anyplace in the nation. That includes here in Scottsdale, Arizona, where I'm Norm Seeley, KI7UP, reporting for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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The bottom line: If a complete spectrum tally is conducted it is likely to be more of a paper inventory rather than a true physical head count. That said, it will be interesting to learn the actual method to be used. (ARNewsline(tm))

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: SUMBANDILLASAT POWER OUT REDUCED

SumbandilaSat has gone to a QRP power level. In order to conserve power for other operations on the new SO-67 South African SumbandilaSat ham radio satellite, ground control team have reduced the power of the transponder carrying amateur radio to 2 and 1/2 watts.

Initial reports from stations in Australia indicate that the reduction is hardly noticeable and that the signals remain stronger than most other amateur radio satellites. Availability of the ZS0SUM payload will be during daylight hours when the satellite is in full sunlight. The actual schedule is published on-line at www.amsatsa.org.za. We will have more ham radio space related news later on in this weeks newscast.

(SA-AMSAT)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the N5IUF repeater serving Dallas Texas.

(5 sec pause here)

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HELPING HAMS: VE3 GROUP BRINGS 102 YEAR OLD OPERATOR BACK ON THE AIR

A 102 year old ham is back on the air after being QRT the past two decades. This, thanks to the generosity of a Canadian ham radio association that helps those in need.

Ethel Williamson, VE3DTW, is a former lighthouse keeper who turns 103 in March. She had been off the air for at least 20 years when the Welland branch of the Handy Ham Amateur Radio Club of Canada herd about her. The organization offered to set up a radio for her at Niagara Ina Grafton Gage Village long-term-care home so she could get back on the air. She accepted their suggestion and it all came to fruition on Monday, January 4th. That's when she made her first QSO with a station in Melbourne, Australia, via a local repeater tied to VK land using IRLP.

Ethel Williamson became a ham after the Second World War when she and her late husband, Cyril, raised their sons, Doug and Bruce, while running the Port Weller lighthouse. The couple lived at the landmark overlooking the lake for 25 years. Now she lives in the long term care facility but thanks to ham radio her voice is once again be heard, worldwide. More about this amazing lady can be found at

http://wellandtribune.ca/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e"46214 (Welland Tribune OnLine)

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RESCUE RADIO: MALAYSIA RED CRESCENT FORMS AMATEUR BASED RESCUE RADIO SERVICE

The Malaysia Red Crescent Society's Johor branch has launched that nations first ham radio based rescue radio service. One that will focus on swift communication to help victims in time of disaster.

The new response group is called Disaster Communication Amateur Radio. The State Red Crescent Society chairman who launched the service said that it was a way to prepare for quick action during natural emergencies and other events where a swift communications response is required.

According to the chairman ten Malaysia Red Crescent Society members are already qualified to use the new radio service. Another fifty-six from

the Northern Region Malay Amateur Radio Association have signed up to become Red Crescent members as well. If a disaster scenario strikes, they will relay information to the headquarters which will in turn inform relevant agencies for further action. (Malaysian Red Crescent release)

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HAM TESTING: NCVEC RELEASES NEW TECH QUESTION POOL

Some new questions and some new answers. This as the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators Question Pool Committee released the new Technician class Element 2 question pool on Monday, January 4th.

The new Technician pool contains approximately 400 questions, from which 35 are to selected for an Element 2 examination. The current Technician question pool became effective July 1, 2006 and will go out of service this after June 30th.

This new question pool will become effective for all Technician class examinations administered on or after this coming July 1st and will remain valid until June 30, 2014. (NCVEC)

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RADIO EDUCATION: THE FOUNDATION FOR AMATEUR RADIO 2010 - 2011 SCHOLARSHIPS

Its January and it's the time when the Foundation for Amateur Radio puts out word that it plans to administer forty eight scholarships for the 2010 through 2011 academic year. This, to assist licensed radio amateurs in the pursuit of higher education.

The Foundation fully funds two of these scholarships. The remainder are administered by the Foundation, without cost for various donors. All licensed radio amateurs may compete for these awards but they must be planning to pursue a full time course of studies beyond high school and be enrolled, or have been accepted for enrollment, at an accredited university, college or technical school.

The awards range from $5,000 to $500 with preference given in some cases to residents of specified geographical areas or the pursuit of certain study programs. Non-US residents are eligible to apply for some of the scholarships.

Additional information and an application form may be requested by letter or QSL card, postmarked prior to January 31, 2010 from FAR Scholarships, Post Office Box 911, Columbia, Maryland 21044. Applications are also available for download from www.farweb.org. (FAR)

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RECOMMENDED READING: "THUNDERSTRUCK BY ERIK LARSON

"Thunderstruck" is a book by Erik Larson that is a true story that interweaves notable researchers and inventors like Guglielmo Marconi,

John Fleming, Heinrich Hertz, and Nikola Tesla with that of Dr. Hawley Crippen, a famous murderer.

Crippen, was an American physician hanged in Pentonville Prison, London, England, on November 23, 1910, for the murder of his wife, Cora Henrietta Crippen. He holds the unenviable distinction of being the first criminal ever to be captured with the aid of wireless communication.

As you might surmise, the story takes place between the late 1800's and the early 1900's and is historically accurate . This is especially true in its treatment of how Marconi became a major "mover and shaker" of his day accompanied by the obstacles that go with success.

Any ham that is a reader should enjoy this book. According to the QCWA's Val Erwin, W5PUT, once he started reading, he could not put it down.

"Thunderstruck" is available either in hardback or paperback at all normal book outlets and from on-line booksellers like Amazon dot com. (W5PUT)

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RADIO BUSINESS: COMMEMORATIVE PK-232 25th ANNIVERSARY SOFTWARE CD FROM CSS

Creative Services Software has announced that the pre-order period is open for its PK-232 25th Anniversary Collectable Compact Disc. This is a limited edition CD that includes such well known programs as PakRatt for DOS, PkFax for DOS, PakRatt Lite, Pkterm 99 and many others. Also included are manuals for all the programs in .PDF file format so that those that have lost their manuals can print them out again. More information on this CD is available at www dot cssincorp dot com. (CSS Release)

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ON THE AIR: THE NEW CW OPERATORS CLUB

The CW Operators' Club or CWops is a newly formed club aimed at encouraging the use of Morse in amateur radio communications, and to promote goodwill among radio amateurs around the world.

CWops is international in scope, membership and management. Its focus is the use of CW, whether for contesting, DXing or ragchewing.

More information on this new pro Morse organization is on-line at www.cwops.org. (N3JT, Southgate)

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RADIO INFO: TAPR SEEKS ARTICLES FOR QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Tucson Amateur Packet Radio is seeking articles for the next issue of its quarterly newsletter Packet Status Register. All contributions are welcome, so if you have anything for the newsletter, please e-mail what

you have to PSR Editor Stan Horzepa, WA1LOU before the January 15th deadline. Stan's e-mail is WA1LOU at TAPR dot org. (TAPR)

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HAM RADIO BUSINESS: FRENCH RADIOCOM.ORG SHUTS DOWN

The French ham radio website radiocom.org is going Q-R-T after 10 years on the World-Wide-Web. Editor Francis Roch, F6AIU, says that a combination of the long hours that must be devoted to operating the website along with receiving little assistance from the European ham community have lead to the decision to close down effective January 1st. An editorial giving more information on the decision to shut down, writer in French is at the website at www.radiocom.org (Southgate, F8KBL)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: IRELANDS IRTS AGM APRIL 24 TO 25

On the ham radio social scene, the Dundalk Amateur Radio Society shall be hosting the 78th Irish Radio Transmitters Society Annual general meeting over the weekend of April 24th and 25th. The venue for the event is the Fairways Hotel, Dundalk Court, Louth. More info is on-line at www dot ei7dar dot com. (IRTS)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: KB1SF NAMED INTERIM AMSAT-NA TREASURER

Some names in the news. First up is former AMSAT North America President Keith Baker, KB1SF, who has been appointed as interim AMSAT Treasurer until the Board of Directors can name a permanent replacement for Gunther Meisse, W8GSM.

Keith Baker, KB1SF, appointment was made by AMSAT President Barry Baines, WD4ASW. As many of you will likely remember, Baker served AMSAT throughout the 1990's and early 2000's both as a Board of Directors member as well as Executive Vice President. This, before taking a turn as President from 1998 until 2000.

It is expected that the AMSAT North America Board of Directors will meet in early January via teleconference to formally elect Keith to fulfill the current Treasurers term that expires in October of this year. (AMSAT-NA)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: NEW ZEALAND DX HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES FOR 2010

The New Zealand DX Hall of Fame has announced the election of three new members to that prestigious body. This years inductees include Dave Johnston ZL1AMN, Aola Johnston ZL1ALE and the late Dave Brown, ZL1HY. All three are being honored for their contributions to the art of DX'ing. The New Zealand DX Hall of Fame was established several years ago celebrate the achievements those outstanding Zed-L radio amateurs

who have excelled in the radiosport aspect of the hobby over many years. (ZL2AL)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: CQ COLUMNIST DAVE INGRAM, K4TWJ, HOSPITALIZED

And a speedy recovery wish to CQ Magazine columnist Dave Ingram, K4TWJ. Dave is currently in a Birmingham, Alabama, hospital recovering from a heart attack he suffered on Thursday December 31st. He was initially treated with an emergency angioplasty to open three completely closed coronary arteries and reported to be improving. Get well cards and letters should be sent to K4TWJ at his callbook address. (ARNewsline(tm))

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD: REPEATER PIONEER GEORGE LeDOUX, K1TKJ - S.K.

It is estimated that the median age of amateur operators is now 60+. So, it is no surprise that the monthly list of Silent Keys continues to grow. Each of those hams undoubtedly deserves a special note. However, it is with a lot of personal sorrow that I tell you of the passing of one of ham radio's legendary repeater pioneers. George LeDoux, K1TKJ of Modesto, California.

Originally from Litchfield, Connecticut, in the late 60's, George became transmitter supervisor for the New York City Spanish language TV station WXTV with it's tower located atop the 55 story City Service building at 70 Pine Street in midtown Manhattan. George was an early adopter of 2 meter FM and viewed the opportunity to build a repeater in the nations largest city at 500 feet in the air as irresistible. And so, the WA2SUR repeater became a reality.

George didn't invent repeaters. That was accomplished by the late Arthur M. Gentry, W6MEP, almost a decade earlier. What George did was to bring them from mere signal repeating devices to the level of early ham radio social networking on 2 meters. A place where a ham could go to forget for a while life's day to day drudgery. And his WA2SUR repeater was among the first if not the very first to adopt this "lets have fun attitude". Soon, the "Sewer" as it became known, had over 500 active amateurs and wide coverage throughout New York, Connecticut and New Jersey. However, it was affable George LeDoux's personality that spearheaded what became a social group of repeater users' rarely paralleled before or since.

If you ventured onto 2 meters in the late 1960's and lived anywhere within 100 miles or so of Manhattan, then you quickly found WA2SUR and bought a set of crystals to get on that fun meeting place. While most other systems prided themselves on emergency preparedness or the distance they could cover, in the case of WA2SUR, the pride for K1TKJ was in knowing he had created a place in ham radio for folks to just have fun.

And have fun they did. Not only were their multiple layers of conversations 24 hours a day, but also picnics, parties, dinner gatherings and the like. And George oversaw it all from his perch atop 70 Pine Street in New York City and from where his voice could be heard daily, usually laughingly saying what became his well known fun signature line of: "Shut up. Shut up. Get off my frequency." If George hurled that barb your way, you knew that you had been accepted as a member of the WA2SUR family.

After leaving WXTV George moved west to California where he became the Chief Engineer of another television station. In April of 1984 he began an in house manufacturing operation for the station to supply its own needs for a new UHF transmitter.

It was a good design and word spread. Soon that station was building two, and then three transmitters with George's highly efficient design. After satisfying their own needs and the needs of the other stations, George's employer decided to stick to broadcasting and to get out of the manufacturing business. A deal was struck in which the assets were transferred and Astre Systems Inc. which was formed in July of 1986 with George LeDoux, K1TKJ, as its president.

At the time of his passing he was upgrading the modulators and transmitter control circuitry for the 14 one hundred thousand watt transmitters at shortwave station WYFR in Okeechobee, Florida owned by Family Radio. Because of this, K1TKJ was making frequent trips to Florida and to his suppliers to build his custom made boards.

On Sunday morning, December 28th, he was about to board a plane in San Francisco to Salt Lake City to investigate delays from one of his suppliers. He was in the waiting area at the airport when he suffered shortness of breath. Others in the waiting area tried to calm him, but soon, he fell into unconsciousness and was not able to be revived.

George LeDoux, K1TKJ, is survived by his wife Cindy and 5 grown children. His son George was a partner in the Astre Systems business. A memorial service was held on Friday, January 8th at Grace Lutheran Church in Modesto.

Ironically, George's daughter Christine LeDoux is a world renowned Country Folk singer and had written several songs about her dad including a somewhat prophetic one about his failing heart called "Angel you've come too soon".

George LeDoux, K1TKJ will be missed by many of us such as myself who knew him well.

73 my good friend. (W2JKD, ARNewsline(tm))

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: FUEL CELL POWERED MOBILES MAY BE HERE SOON

A new way to get around may one day have an impact on the way we hams operate mobile in motion. Don Wilbanks, AE5DW, reports on an emerging technology called the FCV:

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Fuel Cell powered vehicles or FCV's are expected to be a technology that could revolutionize road transportation and possibly the way hams operate mobile in the coming years.

FCV's are normally powered by pure hydrogen gas onboard in high-pressure tanks, but some can also be used with hydrogen rich fuels such as methanol, natural gas or even gasoline. Previously, FCV's only worked efficiently in warm weather, but this latest technology permits operation at temperatures as low as minus 13 degrees Fahrenheit. This should make the concept accessible for almost everyone anywhere.

So far Fuel Cell powered vehicles only have a maximum range of about 250 miles, but that's more than enough for most everyday shopping or job commutes. And FCV technology improves so should the distance these vehicles can travel before refills.

I'm Don Wilbanks, AE5DW.

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This emerging technology also has the potential to significantly reduce energy use and harmful emissions, as well as our dependence on foreign oil. And being far electrically quieter than todays cars and light trucks means better signal reception when operating on the road. (Technology Today)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: ARISS DEBRIEFING SESSION HELD

In ham radio space related news, an Amateur Radio on the International Space Station debriefing session was scheduled with Expedition 20 and 21 crew members Nicole Stott, KE5GJN and Robert Thirsk, VA3CSA on Tuesday, January 5th. The feedback provided by the astronauts will help ARISS update program procedures. (ANS)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: ARISS HELPS CELEBRATE MARCONI EVENT

An International Space Station school contact was planned for January 7th with participants at Marconi Commemoration Event at the University of Rome Tor Vergata. The event was scheduled to begin at approximately 09:00 UTC and was to be a telebridge between NA1SS and W6SRJ.

The University of Rome Tor Vergata is one of the largest research-based institutions in Italy. It is an international center for research and education and it is well known for scientific studies. In recent years its activity of technology transfer and cooperation with other public and private organizations in different fields has given it an increasingly important role. (AA4KN)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: NEW RS38 SATELLITE BEACON HEARD

Mike Rupprecht, DK3WN, reports on the hearing a new CW satellite beacon from the RS38 bird on 435.490 MHz. In an e-mail to the AMSAT Bulletin Board, Rupprecht indicates that it is coming from the Russian UGATUSat satellite and indicating that UGATUSat is RS-38. An audio file of the beacon in operation can be heard at www dot dk3wn dot info. (DK3WN, Southgate)

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ON THE AIR: BLACK SEA CONTEST CLUB CONTEST

On the air, word that the Black Sea Contest Club will sponsor the "Black Sea Cup International Contest 2010" which will be held between 1200 UTC on February 6th to 1159 UTC on February 7th. For more information on the contest, please visit the BSCC web page at http://bscc.in (BSCC)

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DX

In DX, word that LA9SN will be operational portable as CE0Z from Juan Fernandez Island from March 16th to the 23rd. Listen out for him on 80 through10 meters using mostly CW at 100 watts. QSL via his home callsign.

DL5AXX will be active as J38XX from Grenada between February 10th to the 24th. His activity will be focused on the lower bands, but he will also participate in the ARRL International DX CW Contest on February 20th and 21st as a single operator all band entry. QSL via his home callsign.

(Above from various DX news sources.)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: K8CX PRESENTS THE 2009 DX SOUND BITES

And finally this week, get ready for some recent nostalgia. This as Tom Roscoe, K8CX, provides DXers and all other hams with 146 memorable DX sound clips from 2009. Its all just a mouse click way at Tom's famous ham gallery Web site where you can listen to snippets of some top gun DXpeditions like VK9NI which operated from Norfolk Island last July:

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Actual contact audio - hear it in the MP3 version of this weeks newscast downloadable at www.arnewsline.org

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And while at Tom's website be sure to also check out some of his other features, including his 12 years of "Rare DX Sound Clips," his QSL Card Museum, the Dayton Photo Galleries and his Tribute to Silent Key ham radio operators. And its all in cyberspace at hamgallery.com. (Southgate)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Davis, W2JKD, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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